



## JILL BILLINGS

### STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# 2015-17 STATE BUDGET AT A GLANCE

Updated July 21, 2015

The budget adopted by legislative Republicans sells out Wisconsin families to benefit the special interest groups behind Gov. Walker's presidential campaign. Because of presidential politics, Republicans refused federal funds to pay for health care programs in our state while giving hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks to the wealthy.

As a result, local public schools continue to face historic budget cuts and higher education is becoming less affordable for students. Republicans' tax breaks have hurt Wisconsin by giving too much of the benefit to the wealthy and big corporations, causing a \$2.2 billion budget deficit and forcing massive cuts to education, health care and our university system.

Democrats believe in putting Wisconsin families first and increasing economic opportunities by strengthening our schools, investing in infrastructure and creating quality jobs to move our state forward.

## K-12 EDUCATION

- Fails to restore the historic funding cuts to public schools.
- Diverts over \$48 million in state funding from public schools to expand the unaccountable private school voucher program.
- Allows for a private takeover of targeted Milwaukee Public Schools.
- Creates the a new unaccountable voucher program for special needs children which fails to ensure that students with disabilities receive the necessary services, specialized curriculum or licensed special education teachers.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

- Cuts \$250 million from UW schools, allows for increased tuition and forces layoffs across the state.
- Fails to fully fund the WI G.I. Bill for veterans and need-based financial-aid for students.
- Defunds 21<sup>st</sup> century energy research and educational programs.
- Deletes tenure from state statute and changes the shared governance roles of students, faculty and staff.

## HEALTH CARE

- Limits health care access and shifts \$360 million in additional costs onto state taxpayers by rejecting federal funding for BadgerCare.
- Eliminates the IRIS program and makes dramatic changes to Wisconsin's long-term care programs leaving the elderly, individuals with disabilities and their families uncertain

about future care options.

- Creates a new payment system for FQHCs (community health centers) which will result in a \$10 million funding cut, potentially leading to clinic closures and cuts in services.
- Increases costs and adds additional barriers for BadgerCare recipients.
- Increases out-of-pocket expenses and raises health care costs for Wisconsin workers by \$85 million.

## **TAXES & REVENUE**

- Decreases the Manufacturing and Agriculture Tax Credit in 2015, generating \$16.8 million.
- Adds 102 positions at the Department of Revenue to increase audits and tax collection.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

- Cuts \$30 million from Knowles-Nelson Stewardship, limiting public land conservation efforts.
- Shifts away from research-based conservation policies by eliminating 80 DNR staff including scientists and educators.
- Allows the DNR Secretary to dissolve the Bureau of Science Services.
- Eliminates all public funding for the state park system and increases park fees.
- Allows the DNR to sell corporate naming rights for state parks.
- Cuts funding for local county conservation staff and reduces grants to prevent runoff pollution.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

- Weakens local control and rolls back community-specific shoreland zoning standards.
- Cuts \$4 million from the successful municipal and county recycling grant program and eliminates funding for solid waste and recycling research.
- Prohibits Dane County from advising the DNR on area water quality management plans.
- Requires county treasurers to include information on tax bills about referenda and levy limit overrides passed in their communities.
- Deletes a municipality's authority to spend room tax revenues on tourism purposes and requires that room tax revenues go to a tourism commission or tourism entity.
- Prohibits towns and counties from implementing conditional use permit rules that are stronger than state or federal laws and prohibits towns and counties from imposing insurance requirements on hazardous liquid pipelines.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

- Eliminates overnight guard tower shifts at state prison facilities.
- Eliminates all youth diversion funding for the George Bray Neighborhood Center in Racine and cuts funding to other organizations that help at-risk youth in Brown, Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee Counties.

## **JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Deletes \$55 million revolving loan program under WEDC and removes the Governor from the WEDC Board of Directors.
- Enumerates the Eau Claire Confluence Project and the UW Madison Chemistry Building in the 2015-17 Building Program.
- Transfers functions of the Office of State Employment Relations into the Department of Administration, eliminating legislative oversight and increasing opportunities for appointees to dictate personnel decisions.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- Borrows \$500 million for transportation projects.
- Cuts \$200 million from the Zoo Interchange project, \$350 from major highway projects and \$100 million from highway rehabilitation.
- Cuts \$ 2 million from bicycle and pedestrian facilities and makes changes to the Complete Streets law, no longer requiring municipalities to integrate bike and pedestrian facilities into state-funded road projects.